

MANAGE STRESS BETTER

Stress is the mental and physical response and adaptation by our bodies to real or perceived change and challenges. Stressors are any real or perceived physical, social, or psychological events or stimuli that cause our bodies to react to stress. Stress is inevitable, but how we think about and react to stress makes a difference in how it impacts our health! While medicine can help to manage stress, there are many lifestyle habits you can adapt to help manage stress better!

Effects of Stress

- Can negatively impact heart rate and blood pressure and can increase risk for heart attack and stroke
- Can increase cortisol levels in the bloodstream which can drive us to food and overeating, leading to weight gain
- Can lead to mental disorders, especially depression and anxiety
- Can negatively affect immune system
- Can lead to poor concentration, problem-solving, and judgment
- Can lead to feelings of agitation and frustration

Stress Management Tips

- Connect with others
- Try different healthy ways to relax or engage in self-care
- Keep a gratitude journal
- Take time for fun, creative activities or hobbies
- Make time to laugh
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol
- Practice deep breathing techniques/relaxation techniques

Resources

- The American Institute of Stress—www.stress.org
- National Institute of Mental Health—nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress
- American Psychological Association—apa.org/topics/stress
- Mentalhealth.gov



PROGRESS - Better Version of myself:

You are here and you are committing to progress.

Assess - Evaluate current stress management habits and think about how you would like things to be different.

Purpose - Find your why and your reason for wanting to make a healthy change.

Prioritize - What do you need to do to make stress management a priority in your life?

Mindset - Determine how you will choose to think about your change efforts.

Game Plan - Determine what is required and what strategies would yield the great return/reward. Set a specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-oriented goal to reach for.

Action - Put the game plan into motion and implement strategies you came up with to help you achieve your goal.

Reflect - Think back on what you accomplished and what you learned from the experience.

Improve - Continue to progress and consider using this strategy to improve in another area of your life.

Lead - Lead by example and serve others. You are able to demonstrate to others what is possible and have a positive influence on them.